

## Patent Claims

1. Method for the production of a N-terminal four kringle-containing fragment of hepatocyte growth factor (NK4) by expression of a nucleic acid encoding said NK4 in a microbial host cell, isolating of inclusion bodies containing said NK4 in denatured form, solubilization of the inclusion bodies and naturation of the denatured NK4, characterized in that solubilization and naturation are performed at pH 7-9 in phosphate buffered solution.
2. Method according to claim 1, wherein, after naturation, NK4 is dialyzed with phosphate buffer pH 7-9 for at least 24 h.
3. Method according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that NK4 is purified after naturation by hydrophobic interaction chromatography in the presence of phosphate buffer at pH 7-9.
4. Method according to claim 3, characterized in that chromatography is performed on butyl- or phenyl sepharose.
5. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that the amount of GSH-modified NK4 is between 0% and 50% of the total NK4.
6. Method according to claim 5, characterized in that the amount of GSH-modified NK4 is between 0% and 20% of the total NK4.